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**Space Heater Causes Franklin Fatal Fire**

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan and Franklin Fire Chief Gary B. McCarraher said that Friday night's fatal fire at 652 Old West Central Street was caused by combustibles too close to a space heater.

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner is still working to make positive identification of the adult male found in the one-family home. The cause of death has also not yet been determined according to the Norfolk District Attorney's Office.

Investigators determined that the fire originated in the kitchen when a space heater was being used too close to combustibles. Coan said, "One of every ten space heater fires causes a fire death. In order to use space heaters safely, they must be three feet away from anything that can burn in every direction."

Chief McCarraher said, "I would like to offer our condolences to the family on behalf of the Town of Franklin; every fire death is a terrible tragedy."

Coan said, "This year the Department of Fire Services and the fire chiefs of Massachusetts have launched a *Keep Warm, Keep Safe* campaign to educate people about how to keep safe while they keep warm this winter." The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness of potential fire hazards this winter as more people turn to alternative heating sources. This statewide effort will include a toolkit for fire chiefs, print materials in several languages, a television public service announcement (PSA), radio PSAs in English, Spanish and Portuguese, and transit PSAs in English and Spanish. Keep Warm, Keep Safe Coalition members will display educational materials that relate to winter heating. For more information go to [www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe](http://www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe).

The fire was jointly investigated by the Franklin Fire Department, the Franklin Police Department, and State Police assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal and to the Norfolk District Attorney's Office.

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